THE GUIDE

TO

LASTING HAPPINESS

BY

REV. CHRISTOPHER HOFFMANN,

President of the Temple Colonies in Palestine.

Published for the Benefit of their Missions.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

W. F. SCHWILK and S. B. HOWE.

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I.

PREFACE.

OUR nineteenth century, in its first and third quarters, was full of great and world-shaking events. The last quarter of the preceding century began with the deliverance of North America; where, for the first time, was established a government upon the basis of equal rights to all, without distinction of race or of religious faith. This great event aroused the people of Europe to the hope of removing a measure of injustice and oppression, which, transmitted to them from past times, had fallen upon them and had checked the intellectual

16815

and material development of man. The liveliest interest in this intellectual movement was manifested by the French and German peoples; the two leading nations of the European continent. The French, in accordance with the example of America, experimented at once to realize a new order of things; while the Germans felt themselves constrained to test the ideas of the new time in the domain of thought, and this appears in the works of the great German poets and philosophers, of Goethe and Schiller, of Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. The Germans were confirmed in their purpose to limit these ideas to the domain of thought; because they saw that, out of the great French Revolution came not the hoped for, happy condition, but the despotism of the First Napoleon, which laid, not only upon the French, but also upon the German and the other nations of Western Europe, instead of the partially alleviated and accustomed burdens, a new and much more oppressive yoke of bondage. But when, through a mighty uprising of the German, especially of the Prussian nation, this despotism was broken, there arose in Germany the hope of realizing that condition which the ideas of the new time had promised. The fifty years of peace, which our German Fatherland

enjoyed from 1815 onward, deceived these joyful expectations; while, with neither the old nor the new evils entirely banished, many other burdens and chains, which the people believed to have been removed, were again laid upon them. The experience of the other European nations was similar. Hence, during this time of apparent rest, the common discontent to an increasing extent took possession of all the advanced thinkers of Europe, and found vent, now here, now there, in civil fermentations and revolution.

The most violent of these outbreaks, the French Revolution of 1830 with its consequences, and the European convulsions of 1848, to which France again gave the watchword, were not able to satisfy the longing for a better condition. Their efforts were thwarted by the want of harmony, and the confusion of ideas concerning the scope and means, which divided, weakened and paralyzed the attempts of those who were striving for the improvement of their condition.

A sign of the lassitude of spirit was the re-appearance of the Napoleonic empire in the person of Napoleon III, and the power which this phantom gained, not only over France, but also over the rest of Europe, by the Oriental war of 1853 and the

Italian war of 1859. The third quarter of our century, which began with the re-appearance of the Napoleonic phantom, supposed to be dead, wrought, notwithstanding, in its last ten years, new and powerful changes. With the German war of 1866, under the lead of Prussia, the way to the unity of Germany was paved; and in the great war of 1870, the new position of power which Germany had assumed, was victoriously maintained and sealed with the fall of the Napoleonic throne and the re-establishment of the German empire. With this seemed to be attained that which so many of the best people of Germany had desired since 1815; and for which they had offered their strength and in part their lives. It seemed that they were at last permitted to hope for an enduring re-establishment of external peace, and a profound improvement of their internal condition. It accorded with this hope, that, immediately after the close of this war, the German and Prussian rule interposed a powerful opposition to the Roman Papacy, to that very power, which for centuries, with hostile endeavor had been building a spiritual barricade against all further enlightening and development of Christian nations, and which even at this moment was making the attempt, by means of the Vatican Council, to

forge for their hearts and intellects still narrower and stronger chains.

But these hopes, to which the great battle and victory of Germany seemed to entitle them, have not been realized. Externally the condition of Europe is such as to have laid upon the people, for a time whose limit cannot be seen, the immense burden of an army maintained continually upon a war-footing. Internally, prosperity suffers from the unhealthy accumulation of riches in the hands of a few, who are held together by a boundless endeavor more easily and rapidly to acquire wealth.

The consequences are crime, sickness, suicide and social ruin. The spiritual power which should oppose these evils is paralyzed by the differences of opinion, and by the manifest untenableness of the ecclesiastical situation. Under these circumstances neither the military nor civil power is able to establish a condition of content, nor to give a lasting guarantee of rest and order.

By this it appears that the German nation, and to a still greater degree the other nations of Europe, need a spiritual preparation by which they may be able to take advantage of the favorable appearance of external circumstances, and of that progress in science and art which is so much needed for the

restoration of a prosperous condition fitted for the intellectual development, and the external welfare of man.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century, and the advanced science of our own time, have not yet really called it into life.

As long as this new birth is wanting, men, no matter whether rich or poor, remain in unhappiness; and, moreover, every important question which is thrust upon us for solution, threatens us with the measureless misfortune of new national wars. One new question is just now the order of the day in Europe; namely, the Oriental question; and it is entirely natural under the circumstances that the people and governments of Europe stand in fear of it, and only with the greatest reluctance take up the question. This reluctance, however, does not settle a question whose solution is demanded by irresistible necessity and inevitable events. The attempts of the people to solve this and other questions, can only be attended with healthful and pleasant consequences when, either before, or at least in company with, the external movement, is experienced that intellectual change in the thoughts and sentiments of mankind which we have designated as the new birth.

It is the purpose of the following pages to bring the thoughts which lead to this new birth, into wider circulation in Germany.

II.

OUR SITUATION.

LIKE other living creatures, man needs to live; he wishes to eat; to dwell securely; to propagate his race; in short, to enjoy the fortune of existence as is likewise the case among the animals. But he also has the need to think; to know the world in which he lives, and the laws by which he is governed; and, because this life cannot endure forever, to win for himself beyond this earthly being a higher and more enduring existence. It is true, the attempt is often made substantially to deny these higher needs of man, and to pronounce them a delusion, or at least to consider them as practically, of no consequence; that is, that one need have no concern about them. These attempts, however, will fail just as necessarily as the attempt to pronounce hunger a delusion, or to say that one need have no concern about that.

Were these higher needs of man a delusion; yet the source of this delusion must be in human nature, and even the circumstance that man is driven by necessity to the notion of such higher needs, only again expresses, in another form, the fact that these needs lie in the nature of man, and are no delusion but a reality. Experience also shows, as well among savage as among civilized men, that not to satisfy these higher needs, or much more to renounce their satisfaction, makes man happy not in the least, but much more boundless in seeking lower pleasures, and debases his nature. Accordingly, if these higher or spiritual needs are recognized as real, it follows from it, that not only is man different from an animal; but also, that he is not what he ought to be in view of his natural gifts. For these spiritual necessities are different from the needs of his animal life, in this, that the satisfaction of the latter is cared for by the same law of nature as that to which the animal life itself owes its existence; so that taken all in all, the animal finds itself in possession of that which it needs; or, if deprived of its needs, existence at the same time comes to an end. On the other hand, however, man can exist without the satisfying of his spiritual necessities: and he

does exist when the means for their satisfaction do not lie within the compass of his powers. If he has no concern for these needs, his condition is degraded, and if, in consequence of this deterioration, the greater part of man is ruined, and thereby apparently freed from a wretched existence, yet there remain many, who through the stupidity arising from indifference, are never released from the feeling or consciousness of a miserable existence; especially in the most gifted natures, if their desires are abundantly or superfluously satisfied, does this become a never-failing source of pain. If he strives after spiritual contentment, he finds himself in the realms of nature about him, poor and unsatisfied. For he finds neither in himself, nor without in the world, the assurance of a life beyond this earthly existence; and for that very reason, there remains to him as an occasion of thought and knowledge, the greatest and most important of all questions unsolvable. True, while he is obedient to this intellectual impulse, he finds a fullness of knowledge; he advances in the investigation of nature and her laws; he makes inventions and discoveries which in their turn improve his material existence; he cultivates also his own powers of thought, and

learns to accomplish that artist work of the spirit, by which his being is exalted, refined and ennobled. Then, so much the more he feels that he lacks the principal thing; and the unsolved riddle of human existence becomes a tormenting barrier to him. Thus, no matter whether man acknowledges his spiritual necessities and is impelled to exertion by it; or whether he denies or neglects them—in both cases he is unhappy as long as eternal life, and the road to it remains closed to him. Hence, a wise man of old said: "I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all."

To this universal unhappiness of mankind, are added the especial miseries and sorrows which arise out of unfavorable natural relations; at one time for individuals, at another, for entire peoples and countries. It is impossible to mention all the evils by which the life of man is disturbed and afflicted. We name only, for example, sickness, conflagrations, shipwreck, railroad and other accidents, inundations, hurricanes, earthquakes, and so forth. These evils, however, are small in comparison with those, which, in consequence of man's

social relations, are poured out upon individuals, upon families, upon peoples, yea, upon the entire race; these evils have their foundation in the spiritual imperfections of mankind; in the ignorance, folly and perversity of one or of many. All faults, errors and vices are a source of pain, and often of despair; not only to those who fall into such sloughs, but they also disseminate innumerable and often unendurable miseries over the greater or lesser circle, to which the influence of such men extends. Even the corruption of marriage, and the failure of children to take advantage of their opportunities, are an inexhaustable theme; how, then, can we survey the misery that grows out of the unhealthy condition of society; out of the ascendency of capital, or even of fraud, over honest labor; out of the lack of employment on the one hand, and boundless wealth on the other; out of the arrogance and injustice of the powerful, and the baseness and self-abandonment of the lowly; out of the dissensions between individuals; out of civil wars; and finally, out of the wars of entire nations against each other? Whether it has become better or worse with these evils in our time than formerly, is a subject of controversy. It is a fact, that they have at all times been bad, and

are still bad ; and that every generation naturally estimates the evils laid upon them as worse than those which formerly prevailed. It is also a fact, that the splendid results of the victorious war between Germany and France righted an old wrong, by the re-conquest of Alsace and Lothringen, and raised Germany out of a disgraceful state of dissension and weakness to political unity, and to a position of power suitable to a people like the German ; but, in regard to the evils enumerated above, scarcely any improvement has been made. Our situation—and this is true, not only of the Germans, but also of the other nations—is in reality a very sad one ; and neither the victories of commanders, nor the successes of diplomatists, are able to make in it any change worth mentioning.

III.

THE AIM.

ALL the needs of man are comprehended in a word—that man desires to be happy, perfectly happy, and happy forever.

He can never renounce this desire; and, if he feels aright, he can not desire this happiness only for himself, but he must desire it for others, and finally for all men.

Since it would be folly to strive after impossible things, the question arises whether a perfect and lasting happiness for individuals, and for mankind in general, is attainable and possible. Many of the above mentioned evils of our present condition are of such a nature that they can not be removed by the power of individuals; nor by the united efforts of many, nor of all men. Another and much greater part of these evils, however, could certainly be very much lightened, or entirely re-

moved, if the sentiments of mankind were earnestly directed towards this end. But the individual, even though he himself be filled with the best sentiments, has as little power over the sentiments of mankind in general as over the events of nature. Neither by persuasion, nor by force, can mankind be brought from that perverse sentiment to that correct sentiment, which is perhaps expressed in a word: Universal welfare for all men without distinction.

Just as we are unable by human means, to still the earthquake or the devasting pestilence; so are we unable to give right sentiments to ourselves or to others, or to banish perverted inclinations or passions. Therefore, it seems as if all attempts at the effectual amelioration of man, must be wrecked upon the impotence of human existence; and hence there would be no use of talking about an aim to be reached. Indeed, from the earliest ages to the present day, this has been the prevailing view, not only of the masses, but also of those men who have been prominent and distinguished by their wisdom and knowledge of men and of the world. Lately this idea of human life has been called pessimism; and in this pessimism, the latest development of German philosophy culminates.

Thus, notwithstanding this pessimistic view, or the renunciation of a true and perfect happiness, may be disseminated as it expressed, far more in the practice than in the teachings of men, still human nature is too well, and too enduringly gifted to allow such despair to penetrate wholly its hopes. Even this pessimistic philosophy has come back to its original conclusion, that it would be best for man as soon as possible to put an end to his hopeless existence; and it demands, not only a peaceful submission in the unalterable unhappiness of being, but also an activity of common usefulness in the farther development of the human race.

Others are seeking to avoid this misproportion between the needs and the powers of man, by, in some manner, limiting or lowering the aim.

Socialism, for example, as is expressed in the organs of the social-democratic party, renounces only everlasting life, that prime spiritual need, and believes that by this, the animal welfare in this present earthly existence can so much the more quickly be attained.

Thus indeed, he loses the only means of banishing from his mind that narrow-hearted and short-sighted egoism, which labors first and foremost, not for all men, but for its own person; and by

this far more limits the aim. For experience teaches that he who would bring about an improvement in the universal condition, must venture his personal welfare, and, under certain circumstances, must sacrifice even life itself. Thus, it cannot be perceived how such sacrifices are to be reconciled with man's inextinguishable need of happiness, if there is no prospect that through such sacrifices, he provides for his own happiness. The welfare of the individual can only be securely established, if it is built upon the common welfare ; and so, every one, who seeks to achieve his own happiness at the expense of the common good, is completely involved in error. It could also be supposed, that if all men were once cured of this error and it should come to be fully understood, that if he wishes to be happy, the individual must subordinate his personal wishes to the welfare of the whole, then even without the prospect of eternal life, a contented condition could be restored. But in order to bring on this universal understanding and to overcome the error ever freshly springing out of the animal or natural being of man, so many sacrifices are necessary on the part of the intelligent, that the happiness of the individual unless the prospect of eternal life is added, must be

exposed to total destruction. Therein lies a contradiction which directly nullifies the idea. For, if, on the one hand, I must strive for the common welfare in order to secure my own happiness, but on the other hand, this striving leads to the destruction of my own happiness, then I stand opposite to an unsoluble antagonism of opposing principles. Since reason is not able to solve this antagonism we may be sure that an innumerable majority will decide in favor of the principle, which, by virtue of the animal basis of man's nature, lies nearest to them, namely, the selfish striving for personal happiness, wherein every sacrifice for the common good appears like folly.

Individuals who have inherited an inclination toward the ideal, can, without recognizing the spiritual needs of man, or without allowing it to influence them, indeed labor sincerely for the common welfare of humanity, and thereby to a greater or less degree, sacrifice their personal happiness: but it can safely be reckoned, that such a willingness of offering will become more and more rare and exceptional, and will at last entirely disappear; because, upon the one hand, it is at war with the sensual nature of man, and, on the other hand, it can not be justified by the under-

standing and reason, as long as the contradiction involved in it is not solved. The few instances of individual self-sacrifice for the general good, without the belief in eternal life, demonstrate only this, that the human being, by virtue of a feeling lying dimly within him, can not refrain from admiring this sacrifice of personal earthly happiness; although it may seem to his understanding to be folly.

The development of nations, or of the entire race, without a belief in eternal life, does not proceed in the direction of that dim feeling, but in an exactly opposite direction, which is supported both by the understanding and by the natural inclination of man, namely, in the direction of supreme selfishness.

This can lead to no other result than to the increase, and finally to the complete dominion, of the animal impulses, when the sentiment which the poet puts into the mouth of the bad spirit, would be fully realized :

"A little better he would live,
Had'st thou not given to him a semblance of heaven's light:
He calls it reason, and he uses it only
But to become more beastly than every beast."

Were this aim but once attained, immediately the war of all against all, the battle for existence,

would surpass and supplant all other contests among mankind ; and the mutual extermination of men would find no barriers ; because man, having become beastly, can never become a real animal to whose impulses nature has given fixed limits ; but his spiritual gifts of nature remain in him so indestructible, that his lusts can be immeasurably increased.

History furnishes familiar examples of such development of mankind ; of which we would here mention only one, the Roman people and empire, which in this manner, under the lead of the Cæsars, sank from the heights of culture and power, down to the greatest degeneracy and misery.

He who would now choose this as the aim for himself and humanity, can do nothing more agreeable to his purpose, than to have no concern about his spiritual needs, and to reject every hope of eternal life. He, however, who desires a spiritual development, and satisfaction of his spiritual needs, must seek another aim, and for him the question arises, is there such an aim, and in what does it consist ?

Belief in such a higher aim is as old as humanity, and extends as far back as the memory of man. All the cultivated peoples of antiquity founded

their ideas, concerning the purpose and order of human existence, upon this belief, although they only dimly felt and anticipated them.

In the course of time, individual thinkers among these peoples felt themselves constrained to transmute this dim feeling, that man has a higher destiny than the satisfaction of his animal needs, into clear and precise ideas. Just as the question of human destiny is determined at the same time with the question of the highest laws governing the universe, or the will of God ; so is the answer to the most important question of life inseparably knit together with the answer to the question—What is God ? And as the existence of the spirit is manifested in His will ; so every error concerning the existence of God, is attended with an error concerning His will, and consequently concerning human destiny. Therefore, it is no wonder, but a necessary result of given causes, that only among the people, where the knowledge of God was secured against the otherwise universally established errors of polytheism, that is, among the people of Israel, a pure and perfect knowledge of human destiny could spring up. The knowledge that the spirit exists in inseparable unity, and also, that the highest spirit is a single inseparable Being,

consequently a person, was first announced by Moses, and distinctly stamped upon the law which he gave to the people of Israel; hence, this law was rightly regarded by the people of Israel, as the revelation of God through Moses. Although this law, as also the religious and social regulations of the other civilized nations—for example, Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Indian, Chinese, Greek, Roman, &c.—presuppose that man is destined to something higher than the satisfaction of his sensual needs, still Moses did not find it yet necessary to give to this higher destiny of man a precise and comprehensive expression; but he left it until there should be a farther development of spirit among the people of Israel. Five centuries after him, there came an urgent necessity to institute investigations concerning this expression; and the glory to which the people were raised in the kingdom of David and his son Solomon, furnished the occasion for such investigations.

In the Psalms of David and in the poets educated by him, the view of life growing out of the law of Moses, was developed to the idea of the kingdom of God upon earth, and at the same time to the idea of eternal life for man. When, however, the downfall of the kingdom of David, and the temporary

victory of the great heathen nations, increased to the highest degree the ardent desire for a solution of the riddle of human existence, these ideas, in the prophets of Israel from Isaiah to Malachi, found their most complete expression; an expression which embraced the fate of all mankind, as well as of the individual. The knowledge of human destiny on both sides, viz.: on one side, the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, and on the other, the prospect of eternal life, formed from this time onward the hope of Israel, of which the prophets (including the Psalms) are acknowledged to be the source and record.

If the prophets contain a higher development of the spirit, and a more perfect knowledge of the will of God, than had found expression in the law of Moses, yet these stood in another sense behind the law. The law was connected with the establishment of a people among whom the law would be realized; the prophets, however, expressed the idea of the kingdom of God, and everlasting life, in words of the spirit; yet they were able neither to bring a new people to a realization of this idea, nor to restore the remnant and fragment of the people of Israel to a unity increasing towards this realization. They could only preserve or awaken the hope of Israel

among the spiritually active Israelites; but this hope extended, in its operation upon their external life, no farther than to call into existence a far weaker copy of the ancient people and kingdom of Israel, viz.: the people of Judea. What no one of the prophets was able to do, was accomplished by the man who, from his earliest youth, made himself the fulfillment or realization of the kingdom of God and of eternal life, the man, Christ Jesus. His resurrection was the actual realization of eternal life for man; and His personal work, which was crowned with the sacrifice of His earthly life, was the realization of the kingdom of God upon earth; and this work, the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth, after His departure was carried on in the same spirit by His apostles. Both these ideas of Christianity are not only inseparably bound together in the person of Christ; but they also remain inseparable for all the followers of Christ; for the kingdom of God can be established and promoted in no other way than by the pursuit of eternal life, and the sacrifice of earthly existence flowing out of this pursuit; and, again, man can not hope to secure eternal life in any other way than by the sacrifice of his earthly existence in the service of God's kingdom. With this, the higher claim, which was demanded and

necessary, the proper and eternal destiny of man and humanity actually appeared in the world ; and what the prophets had foretold was fulfilled in Christ. It was, however, the design of Christ's appearing that the kingdom of God and everlasting life should become the inheritance of all men, and in this, has consisted the problem for all spiritual-minded men from the time of Christ to the present day.

In this it still consists to-day. This problem is naturally incapable of solution by those to whom it is unknown, or inconceivable, that Christ has actually solved and removed the old, old riddle of human fate, after the word for this solution was already found by the prophets. Against this aim which we will call, briefly, the aim of prophecy, arise two objections which mutually support each other ; and which have now-a-days been very much disseminated and made current in the writings of talented men, from Voltaire and Volney, to Strauss and Renan.

The first of these objections runs something like this : With all the means of advanced physical science, it can not be proved that a spiritual being (God) created the world and man ; nor, that that which distinguishes man from an animal, depends

upon the working of a spiritual force; in short, the existence of the spirit is not scientifically demonstrated.

The second objection might be expressed in this way: It can not, with authentic certainty, be demonstrated that those things which the apostles, and other sacred writers immediately after the time of Christ, have told us concerning His life and labors, especially concerning His resurrection from the dead, are really true, and happened just as, for example, they are narrated in the Gospels.

Both these objections are correct in themselves but he who, through them, allows himself to be restrained from the comprehension of the aim of prophecy mentioned above, shows by this, that he has not understood our statement. An evidence, drawn from natural science, of the existence of a spiritual being is impossible; because the spirit is something entirely different from the material world, for the conception and knowledge of which, our external senses are adapted.

Natural science can speak only of things perceptible to the senses; but it cannot speak, it will never be able to speak, of spiritual things. The reasons for the acceptance of a spiritual Being are not reasons founded upon natural science; but they

depend upon perceptions which throng upon mankind just as truly as the perceptions of sense ; but not through the senses. To many it may sound strange that there are other perceptions than through the senses. But mathematical principles depend upon such perceptions, not produced by the senses ; and this is truly more strange, since upon these principles all measures of proportion in the material world are founded. He who thus seeks for a proof founded upon natural science for the evistence of the spirit desires an iron-poker made of wood, and proves himself incapable of thinking upon such questions.

As to the second objection, there are few historical facts which can so easily be believed, as the work and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, it must be admitted, that the reports of these occurrences furnish some obscurities and difficulties ; that they do not satisfy the demand for a record indisputable, from a diplomatic point of view ; and that no one can be forced by means of this historic testimony to believe these reports. If a man is so precise as this, he must also reject as thoroughly unreliable, nearly the whole history of the Greeks and Romans, together with the history of the middle ages ; and he must satisfy himself with the thought,

that we are left almost entirely in ignorance concerning past events. Every one can do as he pleases about that. But, if it seems to him improbable that the man who created Christianity, that is, the faith in the accomplished realization of the kingdom of God, and exalted it to a power in the world, has really finished this realization, yet it does not follow from this, that the realization in itself would be impossible, or at all indispensable ; but it would only follow from it, that it must yet be accomplished, and that an individual, in his pursuit of it, must conduct himself precisely like the man who believes in the finished realization.

Both of these objections are throughout unimportant, as far as the question whether the aim of prophecy is the real aim of human destiny, is concerned. On the other hand we must give to every man the choice whether or not he is able to understand that which we have above demonstrated, that is, to make man happy, care must be taken to provide not only for his sensual and animal wants, but also and above all for his spiritual necessities ; and that for the satisfaction of the latter, nothing save the realization of the idea of prophecy, that is, the kingdom of God and eternal life, will suffice. He who understands this, must have the more patience with

those who do not understand it ; because it remains to him to realize these ideas and by this to make this understanding and comprehension easier for others. Besides, it cannot be wondered at, that in our time it is especially difficult for men to believe in the idea of prophecy, or in the true and original Christianity. For, at a glance at what to-day passes for Christianity it is seen that this so-called Christianity is as different from the Christianity of Christ and the apostles, as heaven is from earth. And, again, a glance at the present circumstances of men shows us that the fruits which were, according to prophecy, expected from Christianity, have not appeared at all. That, of course, is very natural and conceivable as soon as we clearly understand the difference between the original Christianity and the disfigured, so-called Christianity.

As long as this distinction is not made, only the superstition of a false Christianity, or infidelity as opposed to Christianity, instead of faith in the real Christianity, is possible.

IV.

ERRORS.

WHAT has shaken the credit of Christianity, and has made an entrance far and wide for infidelity, is not so much the objections raised by the learned against the credibility of the Bible, as the circumstance that, although for years Christianity has been received, believed and venerated by many nations, nowhere has entered that happy condition which the prophets of Israel describe under the name of the kingdom of God.

If these fruits had been attained, we should disregard the objections of many learned men, just as for example, those who employ a homeopathic instead of an allopathic physician disregard the objections which are brought to bear against homeopathy by a great majority of scientifically educated physicians; or, *vice versa*, by the homeopathic physicians against allopathy. Generally speaking, man

is not by nature inclined to infidelity, but on the contrary to credulity. If, then, for 1800 years Christianity has been commended as the unfailing means for lasting happiness, and if this happiness has never yet appeared, it is indeed not to be wondered at, that the most credulous, at last, becomes puzzled, and begins to doubt.

This doubt that Christianity really accomplishes that for which it is extolled, is no error; but it is justified by the circumstances of the case, and by the necessary conditions of a thorough investigation. A blind belief is a weak belief; and every deeper knowledge begins with doubt. It is not, however, accomplished by doubt; but the question must be put and answered, whether the failure of the work begun by Christ and the apostles, follows necessarily from the management instituted by them; whether their way was wrong; or whether the way was in itself, right and mankind have not attained their aim because this way has not been firmly held and pursued to the end.

This investigation is not so complicated as to need great scholarship; it requires nothing more than a resolute thinking; of which, it is true, not all men are capable. Hitherto the great mass of mankind have held fast to Christianity, not because they

had proved it and found it correct, but only from custom and tradition. Fortunately this is no longer possible, because doubt has been very widely disseminated, and infidelity has grown to a power which cannot be overlooked. Indeed many now embrace infidelity, not in consequence of thorough investigation ; but, as they have been accustomed to lean upon the authority of others, because they think that all educated persons reject Christianity. This externally received infidelity is neither better nor worse than an externally received faith in Christianity.

Amid the conflicts of opposing views concerning Christianity, the necessity of accurate thinking and of thorough examination is gradually more and more forced upon us ; and in this lies the progress of our time.

The first inquiry in the examination of Christianity, is whether the aim after which Christ and the apostles commanded us to strive, the aim of prophecy, namely, the kingdom of God upon earth and eternal life ; whether this aim truly corresponds to the needs and to the destiny of man.

As soon as this question is answered in the affirmative, the second question arises, whether, or not, the method which was illustrated by Christ and the

apostles leads to this aim. We are not to consider here whether this history happened just as described ; or whether it was written down by some one of the poets for the purpose of showing us the way to the aim of prophecy ; but we are only to inquire whether, or not, such a method leads to the aim. He, who answers this question in the affirmative, afterwards, if he please, can investigate the narratives of the New Testament concerning Christ and the apostles, to find whether they are trustworthy reports of facts, or only sublime poems which must still be realized. This latter investigation, for which certainly some degree of education is necessary, does not decide concerning the religious principles of man. Only yes, or no, to the first two questions, can decide this.

Every one who is able to think logically must either answer the first question in the affirmative, or he must renounce the spiritual destiny of man, progress and perfection, and receive, as the aim of human existence, animalism and ruin. Every one, who desires spiritual progress, is compelled to answer the first question in the affirmative, and then, after an unbiased examination, nothing remains to him but to give the same answer to the second question. We cannot spare our readers the exam-

ination, but are perfectly certain that every one who thoroughly weighs these questions will finally arrive at the answer: Yes, the aim of prophecy is really the true destiny of man; and the method of Christ and the apostles, even the true and genuine Christianity, is the way to this aim. Now, because in the 1800 years since the time of Christ, the aim has not only not been reached, but a condition has arrived in which the aim as well as the means have become in the highest degree doubtful to the most intelligent; no other conclusion remains, than, that in the course of time man must have departed from the right way; and, that instead of the Christianity of Christ and the apostles, a form of Christianity has arisen which naturally has not been able to produce the results of real Christianity.

The feeling that this was true found expression 300 years ago in Luther and the other reformers; and led to an important commotion and change in the conduct of Christianity. Where the Reformation proper did not succeed, a necessity for the improvement of the churches was recognized; and they sought to remedy these defects by the regulations of the Council of Trent; and especially by the activity of the order of Jesuits. Neither the Jesuits, nor the teachers of the Protestant church, were able

to restore the Christianity of Christ and the apostles ; and, although their activity was abundantly useful and promotive, neither among Catholic nor among Protestant nations has that been restored, which is demanded by man as the condition of his spiritual development and happiness. For this reason, among individual thinkers, at first arose that distrust of Christianity which in the midst of the most spiritually advanced nations, viz. : in France, Germany, England, &c., has acquired such a strength that the downfall or self destruction of Christianity is regarded as only a question of time.

In fact, if it is not soon proved that true Christianity is something different from what is regarded in the Catholic and Protestant churches as Christianity, and that this true Christianity is able to establish the kingdom of God upon earth, then with the visibly approaching dissolution of the hitherto existing churches, Christianity itself will also disappear from the earth.

It is thus an imperative demand of our times that real Christianity, the Christianity of Christ and the apostles be not only fully understood, but actually carried into effect. Not to go amiss in carrying this into effect it is necessary clearly to understand the errors in the conception of Christianity which

have hitherto stood in the way of the best minded and most far-seeing man, in order that these errors may be avoided.

The progress of history has now brought these errors more clearly to light than was the case in former times; and it is no boast to say that we now recognize as errors things which in the past were considered right and indispensable by the most intelligent men.

We desire briefly to point out these errors; fully recognizing the fact that the men who formerly held them often chose these with the purest intention and after the most earnest deliberation; while on the other hand, the motives which then influenced them to embrace these errors no longer, in our times, have any authority. In the hand of the Omnipotent Spirit who governs the development of the human race, even the errors of mankind are a powerful means.

From the moment, however, when we recognize anything as an error, it would be rebellion against God if we should cleave to it, and, out of respect to the past, deny the truth.

That digression from the Christianity of Christ and the apostles which was most important and the most fruitful in consequence, was the obscuring of

the aim itself. Nevertheless, this obscuring was so intimately connected with the circumstances under which Christianity entered the world, that its coming, by reason of the imperfection of human nature, was inevitable ; and hence, was foreseen and foretold by Christ himself, and by the apostles. It consisted in losing sight more and more of one side of the prophetic idea, viz. : the kingdom of God upon earth, and by this, they lost the key to the understanding of the other side which they still eagerly clung to, viz. : eternal life. So strongly, indeed, did they hold to the idea of the kingdom of God upon earth that they clung tenaciously to the necessity of a spiritual kingdom, of a spiritual government ; and so by the increasing expansion of Christendom, this government, which Christ had founded in a narrow circle by the installation of his apostles, was perfected to an eternally magnificent organism.

The Catholic churches have preserved this part of the Christian idea, and therein lies the secret of their firm organization. They however forgot the nature and purpose of this organization, namely : the condition of man represented by the prophets ; which condition is to be reached in the kingdom of God ; and, so far as this happy condition as an aim was of any avail, it was pushed over into eternal life ; and

was thus presented under the disfigured form of a hereafter entirely separated from the life upon earth. By this, the organism effected upon earth, to which the name of church was given, lost its standard by which it should have been formed and judged ; and thus the power of the church became an arbitrary despotism, which, instead of freeing man from burdens and evils, laid additional burdens upon him and allowed the evils to continue. A legitimate criticism of the ecclesiastical power or hierarchy was treated as an attack upon sacred things, as a revolt against the law of God. This change of the kingdom of God into its opposite was fortified by two false principles which prevail in the Catholic church to-day :

(1) The hierarchy instituted according to the rules of the church, and its officers, receive through the office itself the power to effect the happiness of man ; and are thus able to demand implicit obedience, even if personally they have neither the mind nor the knowledge which belongs to the kingdom of God.

(2) The consent of the whole body of church dignitaries is an infallible assurance of the truth and correctness of that which they teach and determine.

As opposed to these false principles, the Reform-

ation asserted the right of the freedom of conscience; and thus bròke the yoke of the hierarchy.

Since, however, the Protestant churches, just as little as the Catholic, have recognized and asserted the prophetic aim of the kingdom of God upon earth, of which the latter had retained at least the form, the essence as well as the form of the imperial organism has disappeared; and, as far as it is not held together by the force of political power, has fallen to such a complete ruin, that it has ceased to exercise spiritual power or government.

The remedy for these errors lies in the return to the prophetic idea of the kingdom of God upon earth, which Christ and the apostles had begun to realize.

Since with this, the overthrow of the Catholic hierarchy as well as of the shadow of authority which the Protestant churches here and there still maintain, is necessarily connected; so such a return, in a greater expansion, is only to be expected when the striving churches are fully destroyed. This, according to the present course of history, can not much longer delay.

Until the present time, the church has been wont, not only to make no use of the prophecies of the prophets of the Old and New Testaments (except

detached passages and descriptions of eternal happiness, which are supposed to adorn the burial and other ecclesiastical services) but it has treated the books of the prophets as suspected and dangerous wares; and warns people against having anything to do with them; and to this, indeed, the frequent misuse of these books, for the purposes of divination, furnishes a good pretext.

This attempt to withhold from man the knowledge of prophecy, (which in the Roman Catholic church applies as well to the whole Bible) involves the church in a contradiction with itself; since, indeed, the books of the prophets, as well as of the Bible in general, are declared to be sacred. It also involves the church in a contradiction with Christ himself, who declares that he came to carry out or to fulfill the law and the prophets; (Matt. 5, 17), as well as with the apostles who call the word of prophecy a light in the darkness (2 Pet. 1, 19). On the other hand, their method of treating the subject has the advantage of rendering the examination of the church and her conduct as difficult as possible, by taking away and confusing the standard for such an examination.

In addition to this chief error of obscuring the aim, still another error came into vogue; and like the

former one was maintained, both in the Reformation, and since that time—an error concerning the means for securing eternal life. That eternal life is the aim for the development of man, could not have been as mistaken and forgotten as was the other side of the prophetic idea, viz. : the kingdom of God upon earth. This latter idea, at the time of Christ, had become current among the Jewish people ; but was misunderstood because they supposed it would be a restoration of the kingdom of David according to its perishable external appearance and, not according to its spiritual significance. As opposed to this error of the Jews, Christ and his apostles were compelled to make especially prominent the other side of the prophetic idea, namely, eternal life ; and the impression of this was so strong that the church could never renounce this aim. Since the kingdom of God upon earth is the necessary first step to, and labor for, that kingdom, the means of worthiness for eternal life, the church, lost the real way of leading men to eternal life, in the same proportion as it allowed the idea of the kingdom of God upon earth to become more and more obscure.

If, therefore, this striving after eternal life was to be retained, it was necessary that the church

should set up other plausible means as a surrogate or substitute. This she did by declaring words and sacraments to be the only proper means of grace, by which eternal life was communicated to man.

As respects the sacraments, it could be plainly affirmed as a reason for their elevation to a place of miraculous or magical efficacy, (for that is understood by the Latin word *Sacramentum)* that Christ himself observed the baptism of John which was established as a sign of preparation for the kingdom of God ; and that at the close of His earthly labors He gave to His disciples the last supper ; and commanded them to repeat this in memory of Him, until His second coming upon earth in the kingdom of God. The fact was overlooked that these acts can have a significance and worth only in connection with a striving after the kingdom of God ; that neither baptism nor the last supper, but this striving after the kingdom of God is the way to eternal life ; and, that obedience to the requirements of Christ does not consist in the observance of these entirely subordinate external acts ; but in staking life upon the restoration of God's kingdom upon earth. Instead of this reasonable service of God, (Rom. 12, 1) in addition to baptism and the last supper, they devised a row of so-called sacraments and divine

services to which they attributed miraculous, that is, unreasonable power to help man gain eternal life. The Reformation indeed cut away something from the luxurious growth of these pretended divine services; but retained for baptism and the last supper the same nominally miraculous power; and the attempts of Zwingli, Calvin, and the so-called anabaptists, to bring about an apprehension of these sacraments conceivable to the reason, have produced endless hate among the Protestants; but have not been able to restore the reasonable service of God. The tenacious adherence of Christians to the doctrine of a miraculous power in the sacraments, does not arise from reasonable grounds, but only from a custom of more than a thousand years. This custom exempts man from real striving after eternal life; and gives him the pleasant prospect of gaining eternal life through a kind of sorcery, and without any spiritual exertion.

More reasonable than the doctrine of the supernatural efficacy of the sacraments, appears to be that other substitute for God's kingdom which has come into vogue in the churches, viz.: the opinion that everlasting life is joined to the use of sacred words. There is an apparent foundation from the mouth of Christ for this also, in the Lord's prayer

which He gave as a model to His disciples ; as well as in the manifold utterances in which He declared His words to be food and drink for eternal life. Just as clearly, however, Christ declares that this spiritual power does not lie in the repetition of words ; but in the knowledge drawn from the Word or expressed in the Word. On the other hand, the church has not only knitted the nominal wonder working of the sacraments to certain formulas of words ; to which, especially if they proceed from the mouth of the priest, they ascribe a purely magical efficacy independent of knowledge ; but from the early times it has also made the chief part of divine service to consist of the repetition and hearing of fixed formulas, the so-called liturgic prayers and ceremonies.

In order to prevent the change or falsification of these sacred formulas, and, moreover, to place chains upon the use of the Word, yea, upon thought itself, the church has established the so-called creeds ; and has, also, made it a condition and a means of eternal life that the dogmas laid down in the creeds should be deviated from neither in word nor in thought. This chain in which the spirit must perish (2 Cor., 3, 17) was not removed by the Reformation, but only somewhat shorn away ; and soon, by the estab-

lishment of more ample so-called creeds, or word formulas, it became anew a grievous burden.

The worst consequence of this error was not so much the disputes caused by it, and the ill-treatment of the parties overcome in the doctrinal disputes,—an evil which, indeed, produced fearful crimes and even hideous wars—but it was much more pernicious, that in consequence of this error, the substance of Christian faith was darkened; and a lifeless and blind adherence to tradition was substituted for living faith and voluntary conviction. While, according to the word of Christ, the confession or the revelation of faith consists in great and good deeds, (Matt. 5, 16; John 14, 12), it has become the rule and practice in the church merely to accept as the confession of faith, the formulas of doctrine which are not understood—yea, even declared by the church to be incapable of being understood—even when this acceptance follows simply from obedience without conviction.

We have thus only very briefly mentioned the chief sources of pernicious errors, which have hitherto been more or less strongly adhered to by the churches; and which have been regarded as real Christianity.

He, who is not fully released from these errors,

can not obtain that knowledge of the only true God and of Him whom He has sent ; which, according to the declaration of Christ Himself, is everlasting life, (John 17, 8). The spirit of our time is directly opposed to these errors; and before its resistless power they are melting away like the snow before the warm winds of spring. This is the sign that the time has now come to restore the original, genuine and true Christianity ; which, through the above mentioned errors, has hitherto been rendered inaccessible to the best and wisest men. Upon the foundation which the apostles laid, was erected a building of wood, hay and stubble ; but the day has come when it must be revealed, as by fire, of what sort every man's work is. As to the new building which the needs of our time demand, it is of the utmost importance that it be not again built of such corruptible stuff; but of the gold, silver and precious stones of the spirit ; and therefore it is a matter of great moment that those things which are errors should be recognized as such.

V.

THE TEMPLE.

Lasting happiness for individuals is only to be secured in connection with lasting happiness for the whole ; first for the people of whose race the individual may be, and finally for the entire race of man. Since, however, this aim is so high and so distant, the question arises whether, so long as this aim is not fully reached, the individual must be, and remain, unhappy. Viewed externally and superficially it seems so. For as long as the community is unhappy, the individual has only the choice of selfishly striving for his own welfare without regard to others, or at their expense ; or, of subordinating, and, if need be, of sacrificing his welfare to the common weal. In the first case, according to the measure of his gifts, he becomes a greater or less dangerous enemy to the welfare of humanity, and thus necessarily loses his own aim :

since in the battle against the universal welfare he must generally be defeated ; and in the exceptional instances, when through artifice or force he succeeds for a time in maintaining his ground, it cannot be concealed that his apparent happiness will soon come to an end. But if he choose the way of labor and sacrifice for the common welfare, he renounces therewith, either in whole or in part, his own personal prosperity.

In both cases, therefore, there seems to be, in the present condition of humanity, no prospect of lasting happiness for individuals.

A deeper and more exact examination shows the contrary. It is certainly true, that the happiness of individuals cannot be secured by a selfish striving after personal prosperity. On the contrary, the spiritual germ of happiness for the individual lies in the belief of the final restoration of a perfect and happy state for the whole race of man.

If he cannot, for the time being, avoid the strifes and sorrows which have been the lot of all men in their hitherto existing circumstances ; yet as long as he is able to hold on to the faith in a better condition, finally to be attained, so long he maintains his courage and his hope. When this faith is extinguished then begins despair, or boundless and

incurable unhappiness. Experience indeed teaches, that the longer a man or a nation lives without attaining the hoped-for aim, the more do hope and faith dwindle away and finally disappear.

That has been the fate of all nations, which have lived in lower or higher degrees of culture, without the way opened up by Christ and the apostles. This way consists in not only hoping and believing that a better condition will finally come; but in making it a mission to usher in this better condition; to establish God's kingdom upon earth; and in staking life itself upon the execution of this work, just as was done by Christ and the apostles. By this it is apparently rendered still more difficult for the individual to secure his own happiness; for he must endure, not merely the universal troubles of humanity, but in consequence of his exertion, he exposes himself to peculiar dangers and sorrows, which, except for this exertion, he could avoid. He gains, however, vastly more than he loses; since, by this exertion, faith in final happiness for himself, as well as for all men, is firmly established in his heart, as the apostle says:

"For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the

things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal," (2 Cor. 4, 17-18). In this correct conception of the present and future, lies the means for the restoration of lasting happiness for the individual, even before the real accomplishment of universal happiness, or the kingdom of God upon earth.

How does it happen, therefore, that while all christian churches, in word, profess this view of life, it has no longer a real existence among Christians; and that the inner happiness, which arises from a knowledge of this, is almost nowhere longer to be met with, still less has become the common possession of Christians? True, many plume themselves upon possessing this inner happiness; but the proof—the heroic courage against hindrances to the kingdom of God, and the real strength for overcoming them—is nowhere to be found. From what was said in a former part concerning errors, this failure of Christianity is shown to be entirely natural.

Men have persuaded themselves that they can obtain eternal life more cheaply than by striving after the kingdom of God; namely, by being pious, by church going, by baptism, by observing the

Lord's Supper, by praying, singing and other ceremonies supposed to pertain to the service of God. In the practice of these, the existence of the kingdom of God—and consequently the striving after it—has been fully forgotten.

After this striving became extinct, it happened in accordance with an unalterable law of human nature, that the belief in the final coming of the kingdom of God, also disappeared; and thus Christian nations have turned aside into the same descending path of spiritual decay, in which the most highly developed nations of antiquity travelled to destruction.

Under these circumstances, there remains only one way for the renewing of Christianity, for the restoration of lasting happiness; first for the individual, then for the community, and finally for humanity. This one way consists in this, that those who seek lasting happiness shall no longer cling to the above mentioned errors; but that they commence anew that striving after the kingdom of God, or the realization of those things of which the prophets spake; and that they thus form the germ of a people, among whom, not only as respects individuals, but also in family and national life, Christianity—the spirit of Jesus Christ shall be realized.

This work was begun by the apostles, whose effectual agency can serve as a model and rule; but in carrying it on men, imperceptibly but swiftly, and in ever increasing measure, deviated from the original spirit. This spirit sometimes moved in individuals, but even in the most significant movement, viz.: in the Reformation, it did not appear in its full brightness, and consequently, not in its full vigor. For the question should not have been concerning the removal of isolated abuses and erroneous doctrines; but concerning the establishment of a new Christian community; and the intention and plan of the reformers did not go so far as this. Even when, on account of the stiff-necked opposition of the papists against every improvement, they were forced to separate from the Universal, or Catholic church, and consequently to found new churches, it was their intention to retain in the new churches the same ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies; with the removal of such things only as stood in open contradiction to the Holy Scriptures.

They could not however agree concerning the question, how many of these ecclesiastical institutions should remain, and the interpretation of passages of Scripture which should decide this;

but there arose disputes of the sacraments, and controversies over the forms of church government; and thus, the adherents of the Reformation were divided into Lutherans, Zwinglians, Calvinists, Mennonites, and those which arose on English soil, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Quakers, and so forth.

It can also with justice be said that this division into sects, on which the Reformation was wrecked, from the beginning came directly from their wishing to establish, not the church of Christ and the apostles, but only an improved church; of which they hoped—and from the then existing circumstances they were able to hope—that it would gradually transform men into a Christian community.

This hope has proved to be decidedly a delusion. The churches have, to a great extent lost their influence and their authority; and are losing them more and more with each succeeding day.

After these ways and errors of the church are all exhausted, there remains only one way to lasting happiness; which is to return to the Christianity of Christ and the apostles. Christ did not wish to establish a church, which, by means of prescribed creeds and ordinances of divine service, should insure the expectation of salvation after death: but

the church established by Him relies upon faith in the kingdom of God upon earth ; which He himself, in his own person, realized, and which is the mission of His genuine followers, to realize in a nation and finally in all mankind.

In this very labor lies spiritual happiness ; and to those who are externally conquered in this labor He promises resurrection and eternal life ; without excluding, by this, the idea of the final resurrection of all the dead at the end of their whole earthly development, which, on account of the judgment connected with it, is more an object of fear than of hope.

This distinction has been fully forgotten and obliterated in the Christian churches, and has caused an obscurity concerning the final destiny of man. This, among conscientious and spiritually active men, has wrought unnecessary anxiety and fear of the terrors of hell ; but a pernicious security, among a great majority of the indifferent and sensual.

The church of Jesus Christ can only consist of such as have for their life's purpose the purpose of their Master to make all men happy ; (Matt. 11, 18), and such need fear neither death nor hell ; but they only need to stand in fear of hindering, by short-

sighted, indolent or precipitate methods, the accomplishing of their own work.

This is the church which Christ founded upon the rock, Peter ; and of which he said, " The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," a promise which the Romish popes appropriate to themselves on childish grounds ; because—according to a tradition not at all well founded—they sit in the chair of Peter as his successors in office.

This church the apostles describe as the body of Christ, as the temple of God, consisting of living stones, of men, who are filled with the spirit of Christ, with His mind and His knowledge, and consequently no more do their own will, but the will of Christ and the Father.

Thus this church, or this Temple, is the way to lasting happiness, not merely for the individual, but for every collection of men who are of the same faith concerning the kingdom of God ; and who subject the collective life just as the individual his individual life, to this great purpose.

If, therefore, it shall once come to pass that a people, a nation is built upon this spiritual foundation, then the external realization of the kingdom of God upon earth will have begun.

Such a people would be more entitled than was

ancient Israel to the name of People of God, which name until now has been erroneously claimed by churches and denominations, partly by nations which believed themselves to be Christian. To collect this people of God is thus the very first labor which is to be done, in accordance with the will of the Master, by the members of the church of Christ, wherever they may dwell, and by whatsoever name they may be called.

In this labor the question at once arises, where is the country of this people? In what place of the earth shall this sanctuary, the Temple, according to the will and counsel of God, be revealed in an entire nation? The Temple itself is bound to no place, but, as Christ says, "Where two or three are gathered together in His name there is He in the midst of them." The visible representation of the Temple in the form of one people cannot be confined to one land; but according to the utterance of the prophet, "The whole earth must be covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

A beginning must be made somewhere; and what human wisdom could be far sighted enough to designate with certainty the place upon the surface of the earth, so that it could be said, "Here is the

spot where the kingdom of God must be founded?" The founders of Rome were shown the place for their city, destined to dominion, by the flight of birds, which they deemed to be the voice of Deity. The pilgrim fathers, who laid the foundation for the North American republic, were driven by the persecutions of tyrannical churches into the wilderness of that newly discovered land. Other peoples have chosen the place for their settlement according to the advantages which they hoped to gain for agriculture or commerce. But the destiny of the people, who shall make the beginning of the kingdom of God among the nations, is so spiritual, and, at the same time, so far-reaching in extent, that no human opinion, no earthly interest, no temporary necessity has a voice in the selection of the place.

The predictions of the prophets solve this riddle. They designate precisely and clearly the old capital of Israel, or what is equally significant, Mount Zion, as the future center of the kingdom of God, when it shall again be realized in the form of a people.

In this, then, is found the injunction to make Jerusalem and the lands lying adjacent to it, the starting point of that activity, which is directed towards the foundation of the people of God; for, in that place where a great and comprehensive

work first sent its roots into the soil, there, when it has grown strong, it must also maintain its dwelling place.

From the multitude of prophecies which designate Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom of God upon earth, at the time of the consummation, are to be quoted as the most important: Isaiah 2; Jer. 31-33; Ezekiel 40-48; Micah 4; Zach. 2 and 12; Rev. 11; Isaiah 25 and 60-66; Zach 2, 4 and 8.

Since we know the idea of the kingdom of God only from the utterances of the prophets, it is entirely natural that we should give a deciding weight to the unanimous and lucid declarations of the same prophets in regard to the place where this idea is to be realized in a people, and thus, made accessible and comprehensible to all nations. Against this, indeed, certain not insignificant objections arise, which we must briefly here examine.

The weightiest objection lies in the present condition of the land designated by the prophets.

Palestine, more than any other land, has been the object of furious and century-lasting conflicts, a circumstance which bears witness, worthy of respect, to the importance of the place; but which at the same time has resulted in fearfully depopulating and laying waste this once populous and magni-

ficent country, and in reducing the inhabitants to a state of misery, madness and degeneracy.

During the last centuries the country came under the government of Ottoman Turks, the nature and operation of whose rule is expressed in the proverb that where the Turk sets his foot grass no longer grows. Under this government, Palestine is still found ; and, therefore, it would not be unreasonable to urge as an objection against the prophetic reference to this land, that it would not be possible, in a ruined country, in the midst of a savage population, under the oppression of a barbarous and tyrannical government, to found a people which should realize the condition depicted by the prophets. To this objection only one thing can be opposed, viz : trust in the power of God who has raised Christ from the dead, and to whom, therefore, all things are possible. Had the prophets been deceived on this point, their credibility in regard to the idea of the kingdom of God would be overthrown. The enormous difficulties which stand in the way of the accomplishment of prophecy in general, and especially in reference to Palestine, make it by all means necessary that faith be maintained, with patience and perseverance, until that, which seems impossible, shall be changed into reality.

Much less significant, is the second objection which depends upon plain misunderstanding. It is said, the possession of the land of Palestine is promised only to the natural descendants of Abraham; and, accordingly it must be understood that the Jews are the people who, according to the passages in the above mentioned prophets, shall be assembled in that land, and there make the beginning of the kingdom of God. But the possession of the land of Canaan, and the call connected with it, were promised to the natural descendants of Abraham only on condition that they kept the covenant of God; (Gen. 17, 9), and obeyed His prophets. (Deut. 18, 15). When they did not fulfill the condition, God spoke thus through His prophets: "The Lord shall slay thee and call His servants by another name." (Isaiah 65, 15). This prophecy was fulfilled by Christ. (Matt. 21, 43). Thus the calling of the people of God, viz, the beginning of the kingdom of God upon earth, and consequently the mission of restoring the Holy Land and the Holy City, was transferred from the Jews, or the natural descendants of Abraham, to Christians or the true followers of Christ, who do not need to be the natural descendants of Abraham, because they are begotten of the Spirit and

are, therefore, Abraham's seed. (Gal. 3, 29). It is sought to avoid this plain understanding of the Holy Scriptures by saying, that, only the spiritual calling of Israel to form the people of God, has been transferred to Christians—the external calling has been reserved to the Jews. This very sagacious distinction is found neither in the prophets, nor in the words of Christ and the apostles; but is merely the off-spring of the brains of certain theologians. The attempt is made to fortify this perverted meaning, by saying that if the people is only a spiritual but not a bodily Israel, the land must only be understood to be a spiritual land, and that Christians must be directed, not to the land of Canaan, but merely to the Jerusalem that is above (Gal. 4,26), as their home and dwelling place.

The question, however, is certainly not concerning the establishment of a spiritual people, never to be met with on earth, but about the founding of a real people, who must, therefore, have a real earthly home. Assertions like this only show how utterly our theologians have lost the understanding of the fundamental idea of Christ and the apostles, which was the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth. If any one is unable to appreciate this fundamental idea, he should follow the

example of Dr. Strauss, who, on account of this fundamental idea, declared Christ to be a visionary; and, consequently renounced Christianity.

A third objection is founded upon the fact that neither Christ nor the apostles commanded Christians to go to Palestine in order to establish there the people of God.

They could not, indeed do this, for the reasons that they as Christians were already in Palestine; and they were therefore much more concerned about carrying the message of the kingdom of God to the other nations of the East and West. Beyond all doubt, Palestine is not the kingdom of God, but, at all times and under all circumstances faith in the kingdom of God constitutes the essence of Christianity.

To plant this faith and thereby to make possible the future establishment of the kingdom of God, according to an external appearance, was the mission of Christ and His Apostles. This does not exclude the idea that when the time has come for the establishment of the kingdom of God according to its external appearance, this work must be commenced in the right place.

This objection is as absurd as if, at the time of the Reformation, one had tried to confute the work

of Luther by saying that nowhere in the Sacred Scriptures was it written that Christians should nail the ninety-five propositions to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg.

Finally, if the inquiry is now made, what is the sign that steps ought now to be taken for the establishment of a Christian people in Palestine the following may serve for an answer :

The Christian churches have lost their credit with the thinking portion of Christian people, and can no longer check the progress of infidelity. This, Christ Himself proclaimed as the sign of maturity for the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth, (Luke 18, 8), and it is not merely an external sign, but it is, at the same time, a power constraining every one who believes in the truth of Christianity, to think upon decisive steps by which Christianity, in its true form as the way to lasting happiness of the world, may be visibly and materially represented. The mere worship or adoration of Christ, which has already too long been made the principal thing, will no longer anywhere suffice ; but, it is time to demonstrate, by the carrying out of His work, that He is really the Saviour of mankind.

VI.

THE TEMPLE SOCIETY.

FROM the reasons laid down in the preceding parts, in the course of the last thirty years, in Wurtemburg, and from there extending among the Germans of North America and Southern Russia, as well as at home in Saxony and Hesse, and a small beginning, also, in Sweden, a society was formed, the mission of which was to make way for a collection of the people of God in Palestine, by first establishing in various Christian countries for this purpose the Temple, that is, a Christian community according to the mind of Christ and the apostles.

The first step in this direction was taken in the year 1845, by the establishment of a weekly paper called the "*Sueddeutsche Warte*," (The Watch Tower of Southern Germany). When in the years 1853-1856 the Oriental war for the defence of the

Russian scheme of conquest against Turkey was carried on, and in consequence of this, the Oriental question attracted the universal attention of Europe, an appeal was publicly made to Christians and Jews for a gathering of the people of God in Palestine ; and attempts were made to gain the sympathy of a greater circle for this work as the commencement of a spiritual new birth for the Orient. At the same time a settlement of some twenty families was made in Wurtemburg, in order to form the beginning of a Christian community life, and at the same time to make a centre of operations in the movement for the settlement of Palestine.

Because the members of this community belonged to the evangelical state church, it led to a conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities, in consequence of which, in the year 1861, the community at Kirschenhardthof and their associates in belief, separated from the established church and formed themselves into an independent association, to which they gave the name of Temple Society. This society in no way, indeed, claims to be the *Temple* which, according to the will of Christ should lead humanity towards perfection ; but it only wished to express by its name the goal towards which it was striving. Since, however, the Temple can only

be called into existence by the power of the spirit, (Zach. 4, 6) ; and, as is the case in every spiritual work, the endeavor is the real, even if it is an invisible beginning of the matter, the society was briefly named the *Temple.*

As the Temple is designed to be spread abroad among all nations, the expression GERMAN TEMPLE is used to designate that part which has been formed in Germany.

In the midst of the work of organization in Germany, the Temple Society did not lose sight of its more distant aim to collect the people of God in Palestine.

In the year 1858, three men were sent to Palestine to take a look at the land in view of its being the destined place ; and, in the years following, several members of the Temple Society settled in various places in the Holy Land. In the year 1868, the Society sent to Palestine two of its principal men, with the direction to effect a settlement in a somewhat more extended measure, and with a more constant adherence to the purpose of the Temple.

In consequence of this there are now four colonies of the Temple in Palestine, viz : one in Jaffa, one at Sharon, an hour's distance from Jaffa,

one at Haifa, at the foot of Mount Carmel, and one in Jerusalem and its vicinity. These colonies, numbering now about 1000 souls, are supported by the labor of their hands, although, in the present condition of the country; this is done with considerable difficulty and sacrifice; and they have built institutions to care for the physical and spiritual wants of the colonists, and also of the Christian, Jewish and Mohammedan inhabitants; and have established common and high schools, physicians, a hospital and apothecaries.

The cost of these institutions which exceeded the means, not only of the colonists, but also of all the Temple Societies combined, was covered by voluntary contributions, which until now have only been sparingly given outside of the colonies; and hence, do not suffice to defray the unavoidable expenses, to say nothing of enlarging these institutions.

The entire Temple Societies of Palestine, Germany and the friends of Jerusalem in North America, Sweden and Southern Russia counted together may amount to somewhere about 5000 souls. A real organization, however, exists only among the members of the Temple in Germany, and among the colonies in Palestine.

Since the year 1874, these colonies have been united under one management, at the head of which are REV. CHRISTOPHER HOFFMANN, of Jaffa, and his associate president and co-worker, REV. CHRISTOPHER PAULUS, of the same place. In Germany the affairs are managed by a committee, which has its seat in Stuttgart, and consists of Messrs. H. G. ABERLE, D. BOCK, and FR. BULACH. For the preservation of spiritual unity, this committee has placed itself under the supervision of the president of the Temple in Palestine.

The organ of the Temple which formerly bore the title of *Sueddeutsche Warte* but now appears as the "*Warte des Tempels*" (*The Watch Tower of the Temple*), under the editorship of Rev. Hermann Weigle, in Stuttgart. Besides this periodical, the Temple Society, or its presidents, have given witness publicly to its purpose and principles, in various writings, of which the titles of the most important are given at the end of this work.

A brief recapitulation of the principles of the Temple Society occupies the next place.

§ 1. The purpose to which the Temple Society stands pledged, and from which it derives its name, is the construction of the Spiritual Temple which the apostle describes with the words, "Ye, also, as

lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

§ 2. Although the Spiritual Temple is confined to no place, but shall be built in all countries of the earth, yet, the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem, on account of its destiny for all humanity, is an especially important aim for the Temple Society.

§ 3. In view of the present condition of Christendom the Temple Society has found it necessary to separate from the hitherto existing religious churches and denominations, and to establish an independent organization, in order not to be hindered in its purpose, or turned aside from it and involved in secondary considerations.

§ 4. The Temple Society believes in the power of God who has raised Christ from the dead ; and is found in no opposition to the essential doctrines of the existing churches. It, however, deems it unprofitable and foreign to its purpose to bind itself to isolated tenets drawn from the Sacred Scriptures ; but, in accordance with the precedent of Luther, grounds its doctrines alone upon the sacred writings of the Old and the New Testaments.

§ 5. As rules for judging the external circumstances of life, the Temple Society recognizes the

law of Moses, interpreted and applied in the spirit of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

§ 6. The Temple Society takes its aims from the predictions of the prophets, the fulfillment of which was the purpose of Jesus Christ, and consequently should be the mission of His followers.

§ 7. In the Gospels and in the writings of the apostles, the Temple Society recognizes the model, to which it must be conformed in the pursuit of its aim ; viz, the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth.

§ 8. According to this model the chief task of the Temple Society consists in caring for the spiritual developement of its members. To this belongs, first of all, the planting and strengthening of the mind of Jesus Christ which is revealed in works of love ; and then the pursuit of the loftier gifts and powers of the spirit.

§ 9. In order to accomplish this task, and to maintain harmony and order, the members of the Society, as far as their local circumstances will permit, are gathered into communities, which are governed by presiding elders and other officers.

§ 10. Besides the general oversight of the spiritual condition of the membership, the management of the regular meetings of the congregation, on

Sundays and holidays, as well as their extraordinary gatherings, is devolved upon the presidents or elders.

§ 11. Since most of the divisions among Christians arise from their putting the external signs and helps of faith in the place of its essence, the Temple Society leaves the treatment in regard to baptism and the Lord's Supper to the convictions of individuals, until the time when the unity of the spirit shall have so far prospered and increased, as to bring about universal regulations, corresponding to the purposes of Jesus Christ.

§ 12. In regard to the authority of the State the Temple Society lays hold of the apostolic injunction: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers."

§ 13. The conditions for the admission and exclusion of members, (the administration of which devolves upon the presiding elders, or other officers), are comprehended under the preceding heads.

The Temple Society is very well aware that in its present form and arrangement, it is far from being what a Christian community, in the sense of Christ, should be, and hence, just as far from being a people of God according to the predictions of the prophets.

Since, however, it is the only society in the world which recognizes the original plan of the kingdom of God upon earth, and has imposed it as a mission upon itself to establish this kingdom, it can be referred to as the institution for bringing about lasting happiness for the individual and for humanity. It may be thwarted by the lack of strength and means, in single attempts; possibly, also, in its chief enterprise in Palestine, but, the fundamental idea, the kingdom of God upon earth, is indispensible to the prosperity of humanity; hence its possible thwarting could be only the preparation for a more powerful and victorious renewal of its work; just as the Reformation attempted by John Huss was a preparation for the more powerful and victorious Reformation of Martin Luther.

Two great signs of our times announce as with trumpet tongues that the hour has really struck, for the restoration of true and original Christianity; and, at the same time, for the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem, to which the spiritual renewing of the Orient is inseparably united.

One of these signs is the commotion in the papal dominion, which has compelled the Roman Pontiff to begin the decisive battle with the decree of infallibility, proclaimed by the Vatican Council of 1870.

The other sign is the commotion in Turkey, in which is included the power of Mohammedism which has hitherto restrained the spiritual progress of the Orient.

This kingdom, and Mohammedism itself, have also in our time, entered upon the battle for existence. The author of this writing can say, as an eye witness, that the hitherto existing condition of the Orient has at length become thoroughly untenable, and the entrance of Western culture can no longer be resisted ; and if a conflict with weapons be unavoidable, the Orient can no longer be aided by the mere force of arms. A repetition of the Crusades of the middle ages is, fortunately for our times, no longer possible ; still less a thirty years' war, for the re-establishment of popery.

It is, however, possible and necessary that at once and forever a radical end shall be made to the immeasurable spiritual and external misery under which the Orient sighs ; and, of which only he, who lives in Turkey and labors for the improvement of its condition, can form any adequate conception.

This however, cannot be accomplished by the overpowering warlike weapons of the Europeans, but only by labors in the spirit of Jesus Christ, that is, by the progress of science created by this spirit,

in one word, by the extension of the knowledge of God and man. He who helps to build that Temple, in whatever country and part of the earth he may be, promotes thereby the peaceful crusade for the deliverance of the Orient ; and hence this appeal is made from the Orient to the Christians of the Occident, and especially to the Germans. For this labor, with more right than the crusaders of the Middle Ages, we can raise the watchword, GOD WILLS IT!

NOTICE.

WRITINGS, which give information concerning the efforts and labors of the Temple Society:

Occident und Orient. Eine kulturgeschichtliche Betrachtung vom Standpunkt der Tempelgemeinden in Palestina, von Chr. Hoffmann.

(Occident and Orient, a Contemplation of Culture and History, from the Standpoint of the Temple Societies, in Palestine, by Christopher Hoffmann).

Stimmen der Weissagung ueber Babel und das Volk Gottes, von Chr. Hoffmann.

(Voices of Prophecy, concerning Babel and the People of God, by Christopher Hoffmann).

Das Christenthum im ersten Jahrhundert von Chr. Hoffmann.

(Christianity in the First Century, by Christopher Hoffmann).

Geschichte des Volkes Gottes als Antwort auf die sociale Frage von Chr. Hoffmann.

(History of the People of God, an Answer to the Social Question, by Christopher Hoffmann).

Blicke in die Weissagung der Offenbarung Johannis, von Chr. Paulus.

(Glances into the prophecy of the Revelation of John, by Christopher Paulus).

Der Rathschluss Gottes oder Gegenwart und Zukunft nach den Gesichten der Offenbarung Johannis, von Chr. Paulus.

(The Will of God, or Present and Future, according to the Visions of the Revelation of John, by Christopher Paulus).

Fortschritt und Rueckschritt: oder Geschichte des Abfalls in den zwei letzten Jahrhunderten, von Chr. Hoffmann.

TRANSLATORS' NOTE.

THE foregoing translation was undertaken as part of a regular course in the study of German. The translators hold themselves responsible only for faithfully presenting, in an English dress, the sentiments of the author. They were struck with the freshness and vigor of his views, and the spirit of self-sacrifice which he has manifested in trying to realize them in actual efforts for the bettering of the Orient. It seems self-evident, at the present day, that he who leaves home, kindred, the pleasures of intercourse with his equals, all the honors and preferments of civilized life, and goes to some degraded land of the East, there to spend his years in complete social renunciation, laboring to extend the Master's kingdom, —that such a man, whatever may be his peculiar views, or his church connections, is worthy the

respect and admiration, and should receive the hearty God speed, of every sincere Christian. It is well for us to remember that God may possibly have several different methods of accomplishing His work in the world.

S. B. H.

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